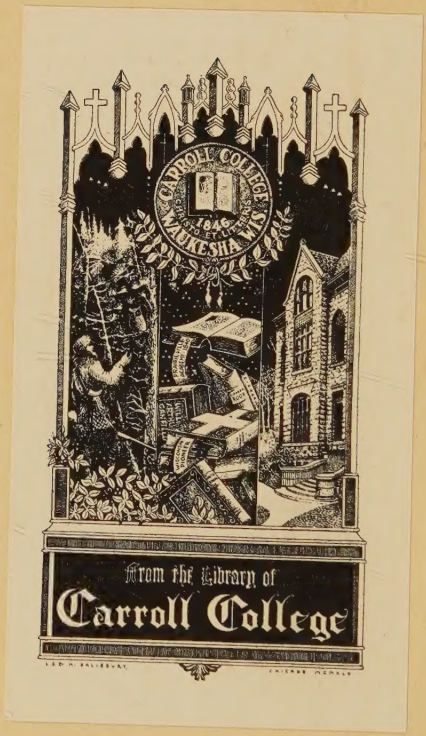
NEITHER HERE NOR THERE

OLIVER HERFORD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NEITHER HERE NOR THERE

BY

OLIVER HERFORD

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NEITHER HERE NOR THERE

THE SECRET

EVE was bored. She confided the fact to the Serpent.

"Tell me something new!" she wailed, and the Serpent—he had never seen a lady cry before—was deeply moved (the Serpent has always been misjudged) and—there being no National Board of Censors—told her everything he knew.

When he had finished, Eve yawned and looked boreder than ever. "Is *that* all?" she said.

The Dramatic Critic asks the same question on the first night of a new Play—"Will there never be an end to these Dormitory Farces," he moans, pondering darkly the

while how he may transmute its leaden dullness to the precious gold of a scintillating paragraph.

Father Time has nothing to say on the matter. If you ask him to show you a new thing, he shrugs his wings and growls, "You can search me." Things old and things new are all alike to Father Time.

Peradventure, in the uttermost recess of the Great Pyramid lies a hair of an unknown color, or a blueprint of the fourth dimension, or better still the ms. of a new play, or a joke that has never been cracked.

When a Roman bath is unearthed in Kent or a milliner's shop in Pompeii we wait breathless to hear of the discovery of a new story, or a new dress pattern, but always it is the same old skull, the same old amphora.

Even the newness of Fashion is a jest of antiquity.

In an Italian book printed in the sixteenth century is a story of a fool "who went about the streets naked, carrying a piece of cloth

upon his shoulders. He was asked by some one why he did not dress himself, since he had the materials. 'Because' replied he, 'I wait to see in what manner the fashions will end. I do not like to use my cloth for a dress which in a little time will be of no use to me, on account of some new fashion.' "

There may be a newer version of this story in the ashes of the Alexandrian library or beneath the ruins of Babylon, but this has at least the freshness and luster of its four-hundred years. Also it throws a light, a very searchlight, on the translucent demoiselles of today (see them shyly run to cover at the mere mention of a searchlight.)

Now we know their guilty secret. Each of them has, hoarded away in a secret drawer (as money in panicky times) a roll of fine silk or voile, or panne velvet, or crepe de chine which she is sparing from the scissors till the Wheel of Fashion shall oscillate with less fury. Then she will put away the skimpy, flimsy makeshift garments of transformed window curtains and bath tow-

els, converted *robes de nuit* and remnants of net or chiffon she has been vainly trying to hide behind—and then—then alas, we shall see her no more!

OUR LEISURE CLASS

ONCE—and not so terribly long ago at that—we used to be very fond of telling ourselves (and our visitors from Europe) that in America we have no Leisure Class.

That there were people of leisure in our midst, we could not deny, though we preferred to call them idle rich, but as for a special class whose whole business in life was to abstain from all useful activity—oh, no!

Even our idle rich, unblest as they are with the hereditary gift for idling, and untaught save by a brief generation or two of acquired experience, find the profession of Leisure a strenuous not to say noisy task,

for while those to the leisure born know by the very feel of it that the habit of idleness is a perfect fit, the newly-idle must look for confirmation in the mirror of public admiration; hence Publicity, the blare of the Sunday Supplement.

But taken as a class our idle rich (though it is being rapidly licked or lick-spittled into shape) is at best an amateur aristocracy of leisure. For the real thing, for the genuine hunting, sporting, leisure-loving American aritocracy, we must go back to the aboriginal Red Man.

And how the busybody Puritan hated the Indian! With his air of well-bred taciturnity, his love of sport, of rest, of nature, and his belief in a happy Hereafter, the noble Red Man was in every respect his hateful opposite, yet if any Pilgrim brother had dared even to hint that the Indian might have points of superiority it would have been the flaming woodpile for his, or something equally disagreeable in the purifying way.

How different it might have been!

If only the Puritan had been less stuck up and self-righteous, the Red Man less reserved! If they could but have understood that Nature intended them for each other, these opposites, these complements of each other.

Why else had Nature brought them together from the ends of the earth?

But alas, Eugenics had not yet been invented and the Puritan and the Indian just naturally hated each other at first sight and so (like many another match-maker) Mother Nature slipped up in her calculations, and a wonderful flower of racial possibility was forever nipped in the bud.

If the Puritan, with his piety and thrift and domesticity and his doctrine of election and the Noble Red Man, with his love of paint and syncopated music and dancing and belief in a happy Hereafter, had overcome their mutual prejudices and instead of warring with flintlocks and tomahawks,

had pursued each other with engagement rings and marriage licenses, what a grand and glorious race we might be today!

What a land of freedom might be ours!

CONCERNING REVOLVING DOORS.

THERE has been some discussion of late as to the etiquette of the revolving door. When a man accompanied by a woman is about to be revolved in it, which should go first? Some think the man should precede the woman furnishing the motive power, while she follows idly in the next compartment. Others hold that the rule "Ladies first" can have no exception, therefore the man must stand aside and let the female of his species do the rough work of starting the door's revolution while the man, coming after, keeps it going and stops it at the right moment.

"Starting something" is perhaps of all pastimes in the world the one most popular with the sex we are accustomed to call the gentle sex; one might almost say that "starting something" is Woman's prerogative; on the other hand there is nothing on earth so abhorrent to that same gentle sex as the thing that is called Consistency; and though she may be perfectly charmed to start a revolution in South America, or in silk pajamas, or suffrage, or the rearing of children it does not follow that she will take kindly to the idea of starting the revolution of a revolving door.

As for the rule "Ladies first," its application to the etiquette of doors in general (as distinguished from the revolving variety) is purely a matter of geography. In some European countries it is the custom, when entering a room, for the man to precede the woman, and if it be a closed street or office door, the man will open it and following the door inward, hold the door open while she passes in. If the door opens out-

ward the woman naturally enters first, since her companion must remain outside to hold the door open.

The American rule compelling the woman to precede her escort when entering a room or building doubtless originated with our ancestor the cave-man.

On returning to his Apartment with his wife after a hunting expedition Mr. Hairy K. Stoneaxe would say with a persuasive Neolithic smile (and gentle shove) "After you my dear," being rewarded for his politeness by advance information as to whether there were Megatheriums or Loxolophodons or an ambuscade of jealous rivals lurking in the darkness of his stone-upholstered sitting-room.

By all means let the lady go first; by so doing we pay the homage that is due to her sex and even though there are no Megatheriums of Loxolophodons in these days—there *may* be burglars! Only in the case of a door that must be opened inwards would I suggest an amendment. What more lament-

able sight than that of a gentle lady squeezing precariously through a half-opened door while her escort, determined that though they both perish in the attempt, she shall go first, reaches awkwardly past her shoulder in the frantic endeavor to push back the heavy self-closing door while at the same time contorting the rest of his person into the smallest possible compass that she may have room to pass without disaster to her ninety-dollar hat, not to speak of her elbows and shins.

How much happier—and happiness is the mainspring of etiquette—they would be, this same pair, if (with a possible "allow me" to calm her fears) the escort should push boldly the door to its widest openness and holding it thus with one hand behind his back, with the other press his already removed hat against his heart as the lady grateful and unruffled sweeps majestically by.

BOLSHEVISM FOR BABIES

"That babies don't commit such crimes as forgery is true,
But little sins develop, if you leave them to accrue;
For anything you know, they'll represent, if you're alive,
A burglary or murder at the age of thirty-five."

WHEN W. S. Gilbert wrote these lines, he stated in an amusing way a great truth, for the doctrine of infant depravity and original sin thus lightly touched upon is, when stripped of its Calvinistic mummery, a recognized scientific verity.

I sometimes think that if the "highbrow" mothers who turn to books by long-haired professors with retreating chins for advice in child training, should study instead the nonsensical wisdom of Gilbert's book, they

would derive more benefit therefrom. At least it would do them (and their children) no harm.

I wish as much as that could be said of a book I have lately come across entitled "Practical Child Training," by Ray C. Beery (Parent's Association). So far from harmless it is, in my opinion, a more fitting title for it would be "Bolshevism for Babies."

Obedience, says the author, "is your corner-stone. Therefore lay it carefully." And this is how it is laid: *"While you are teaching the child the first lessons in correct obedience, do not give any commands either in the lesson or outside except those which the child will be sure to obey willingly."*

Obedience is to be taught by wheedling and cajolery, which lessons the clever child will apply in later life as bribery and corruption. The author denies this in Book I, p. 130, but his denial is so curious it deserves quoting: *"You would entirely vitiate its principles if in giving this lesson you*

should state it to the child like this: 'If you do not do thus and so, I will give you no candy.'" Then on the same page: *"While the thought of candy in the child's mind causes him to obey, yet the lesson is planned in such a way that you are not buying obedience."*

The "five principles of discipline" are embodied in the following story: The father of a boy sees him and two other boys throwing apples through a barn window, two of whose panes had been broken. To make a long story short, the parent, instead of reproving his offspring, says: "Good shot, Bob! Do you see that post over there? See if you can hit it two out of three times." "It would have been unwise for that father (adds the author of "Practical Child Training") to say, 'I'd rather you'd not throw at that window opening—can't you sling at something else?' The latter remark would suggest that the window was the best target and the boys would have been dissatisfied at having to stop throwing at it."

The inference that the boys only needed the father's objection to an act on their part to convince them that it was a desirable act would be ludicrous if it weren't so immoral.

If you ask me which disgusts me most, the Father or his sons, I should reply without a moment's hesitation—the Author of the book!

THE TUTTI-FRUTTI TREE

WHEN the author of the most famous Love Song ever written, cried, "There is no new thing under the sun," cigarettes, chewing-gum, the thermos-bottle and the "snapper" for fastening ladies' frocks—(an indispensable thing when one has several hundred wives)—were yet to be invented.

Neither so far as we can learn, had Solomon who knew and could address in its own language every flower and tree in existence, ever heard of the Tutti-Frutti Tree.

There is to my certain belief only one tree in existence answering to that name, and I christened it myself. I am its Godfather.

In the heartmost heart of the fruitful Paradise of New Jersey stands a small but ancient stone cottage that has come to regard me as its lord, and on Squire Williams' estate, whose verdant acres lie just outside my garden fence, grows the Tutti-Frutti Tree.

Once it was a young Apple Tree. It is still young, but as the result of a series of sap transfusions it is also several other kinds of tree, and when it grows up it will bear apples, quinces, two kinds of pears, peaches and, I believe, plums—almost everything in fact except Water Melons.

Some day a future Stevenson will immortalize it in verse something after this fashion,

The Tutti-Frutti Tree so bright,
It gives me fruit with all its might,
Apples, peaches, pears and quinces,
I'm sure we should all be happy as princes.

It's quite absurd, of course, but just suppose the Tree of Knowledge in that First Garden has been a Tutti-Frutti Tree instead of an Apple Tree! With seven sep-

arate kinds of fruit to choose from, all equally forbidden and, for that reason, equally desirable, how could Eve ever have decided which one to pluck?

And with Eve's hesitation Sin would have been lost to the world!

Let us give thanks that the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was *not* a Tutti-Frutti Tree.

THOSE BILL-BOARDS

EVERY now and again, generally when the warm weather is upon us, somebody or other starts a heated discussion about something that is of no particular interest to anybody.

This time it is Mr. Joseph Pennell, the artist, who wails and gnashes his pen about the terrible bill-board and advertising pictures that deface the public buildings and thoroughfares of American cities and the public scenery of the American countryside.

If my opinion were asked I should be tempted to quote the gentle answer with which the late William D. Howells was wont

to turn away argument, and say to Mr. Pennell, "I think perhaps you are partly right."

But since I am not on Mr. Pennell's list of great American artists, a list, by the way that contains only two names, I am free to say what I really think, and that is that if the dear old familiar "Ads" were suddenly to disappear from the streets and cars, I should miss them very much.

Perhaps I have acquired a taste for them as the dweller near a street railroad first endures, then tolerates, and at last becomes so completely habituated to the roaring of wheels and the clang of metal that he is unable to sleep without their soothing lullaby.

Soothing—that's what they are, these advertising pictures. They soften the underground torment of travel in the Subway, they take the place of the scenery which beguiles the tedium of ordinary travel, and at least they are, as a rule, more interesting to contemplate than the people in the opposite seat. Those people are strangers, the people in the advertisement panels are, many

of them, old friends, friends met in other cars in other cities. Mr. Pennell no doubt would like to see them thrown off the train, but I am always glad to meet them again, and to some of them, with whom I have a sort of informal bowing acquaintance, I mentally take off my hat.

One amiable gentleman in particular I always look for and hail with delight when I find myself sitting opposite to him. He is an Italian, I take it, from his appearance, and from Naples, to judge by his accent, which, though I have never heard his voice, is depicted as plainly as the nose on his face.

Neither do I know his name, but I call him Signor Pizzicato, for it is quite evident that nature intended him for an Operatic career. How he ever came to be a barber, I cannot imagine. Perhaps he sang in the Barber of Seville and lost his voice and became a realist, as some painters lose their sense of form and become cubists or futurists. Whatever he should have been or might have been or was, a barber is what he

is now, and I gaze upon him in fascination as with a priceless gesture of thumb and forefinger (as if he should pluck an individual mote from a sunbeam) he extols to his customer and to you, the bouquet so ravishing of the hair tonic he holds in his other hand, on the sale of which he presumably receives a large commission.

Then there is that delightful little Miss clad in airy next-to-nothings—but no, on second thought I shall not introduce you to her. I fear she is not to be trusted. The last time I sat opposite to her in a street-car in Cleveland—(or was it in Buffalo)—she caused me to go five blocks past my destination which happened to be a railway station, so that I was two blocks late for my train.

All I will tell you about her, gentle reader, is that she has fringed gentian eyes with a look in them that says quite plainly nothing would gratify her more than to play the same trick upon you.

All this chatter, I am aware, has nothin to do with Art, that is to say the

"Art of Painting"; that large, severe-looking female you sometimes see crouched in an uncomfortable position on a still more uncomfortable cornice of a public building, wearing a laurel wreath and a granite peplum, and holding in her hand a huge stone palette.

But sometimes this severe female climbs down from her stone perch and takes a day off, Coney Island-wise, on the bill-boards and street cars, and then if she is not always at her best, she is often very amusing.

And just because a goddess isn't stuck up it doesn't prove that she isn't a goddess —does it?

THE LURE OF THE "AD"

KIPLING once, when sojourning in a far country, complained bitterly of the thoughtlessness of his friends at home in sending him a batch of magazines shorn (to save postage) of all the advertisements. Which shows that the most grown-up of artists may still have the heart of a child.

For my part, if I were forced to make choice between the advertising pages and the reading matter (so-called), I should in nine periodicals out of ten choose the former.

To the grown-up child the advertising section of the magazine takes the place of the Shop-Window of infancy through which, with bulging eyes and mouth agape,

like some mazed minnow staring at the submerged Rhine-Gold, he once gazed at the tinsel treasure so bitterly beyond his penny's reach.

And now, just as far out of reach as ever, in the display-window of the advertising page, the grown-up child gazes at the miraculous Motor-Car gliding, velvet shod, through palmy solitudes reflecting the rays of the setting sun with a splendor out-Solomoning Solomon.

Or the "Home Beautiful," constructed throughout of selected materials of distinctive quality, and roofed with spark-proof shingles of the most refined pastel tints, *"just the home you have dreamed about at a price that will dumfound you! Enclose this coupon with your order."*

Again it is the magical cabinet that brings into your very lap as it were the Galli-Curci, the Tetrazzini or any other "ini," "owski" or "elli" it may please your fancy to pick from its golden perch in the operatic aviary.

And what a relief to turn from the magazine pictures of the slick-haired hero and the slinky heroine of fiction (perpetually *vis-à-vis* yet always looking past each other)—to turn from these to the very attractive, intelligent-looking girls of the advertising pages, girls exquisitely coiffed, gowned and silk-hosed and ever happily employed in some useful task: this one (in the Paquin "trottoir" of mouse-colored voile) joyously propelling a vacuum-cleaner, this (in the afternoon toilette of tricolette) mixing the ingredients for a custard pie in a forget-me-not-blue Wedgwood bowl, and this, not less lovely than either of her sisters, polishing a bathtub with some magic powder till it glistens like a Childs' restaurant.

Now, any one of these dear girls, on her face alone—not to mention her graceful carriage and delicately moulded stockings—might without the least effort in the world have obtained a position as a Star in a Musical Comedy—with her picture in the *Cosmopolitan* or *Vanity Fair* at least once a fort-

night—but she prefers the simple household task, the vacuum cleaner, the spotless oil-stove, the shining bathtub to the plaudits of the masses.

And this is only one of the many lessons that are to be learned from the advertising pages. Who can look at the busy little Dutch lady in the blue frock and white cap and apron, stick in hand, chasing the Demon Dirt in street cars, subway and elevated stations, billboards and electric signs, all over town, all over the continent for that matter —who can look at the determined back of that fierce little lady (no one has ever seen her face, save the Demon) without inwardly swearing that wherever Demon Dirt may show his face, whether it be on the stage, the picture screen or the printed page of fiction he will do unto him even as doth the Little Dutch Lady with the big stick—

Or is it a rolling pin?

LOOK BEFORE SHE LEAPS

THE Fourteenth of February in Leap Year is a dread-letter day for the shrinking bachelor and the shy (wife-shy) grass widower.

The butterfly-winged statue of Femininity that, for three happy leapless years, he worshiped from a safe distance (at the foot of its pedestal), has come to life, has climbed down from its vestal perch, changed fearfully from cool quiet marble to something of the consistency of warm india rubber—from an adorable image to—the female of the species.

And with all the term implies. The butterfly wings of Psyche, iridescent, like rain-

bows reflected on mother-of-pearl, have shrivelled and blackened into the umbrella-ribbed wings of the vampire and the petalled lips from which could only be thought to issue the maidenly negative "yes" or the melting affirmative "no"—are twisted into little scarlet snakes that hiss, "Kisssss me my fool!"

"Look before she leaps!" is the Leap-Year slogan of the shrinking Bachelor, and it is a perfectly splendid motto, as mottoes go.

But a motto is like a cure for a cold which is only good to cure a cold that has not yet been caught, and the shrinking one is already as good as caught and his perfectly splendid slogan is of no more use than an icebox to an Esquimaux or a fur coat in Hell.

The Leap-Year Bachelor's only hope is to feign death. Like the Bear in Æsop, the Female of the Species Human has no use for any but a "live one."

If he flees he is lost—(or found, according

to whether the speech be given to the male or the female actor of the scene,)—and if he be a grass widower, he is made hay while the sun shines.

Now whether Providence intended the instinct of flight for the preservation of the hunted one or as a stimulus to the hunter, will never be known. With wolves and tigers it works both ways, but with the leap-year "Vamp" it works pretty much only one way.

And so the gentle bachelor flees and is caught and is lived upon happily ever after——

. . . .

To see a statue come to life must be a terrifying spectacle. Ovid's tale of Pygmalion and Galatea is only for those who get their ideas about artists from magazines to the vacuity of whose contents the face of the girl on the cover may well serve as an index.

I am quite certain that when Pygmalion saw his perfect marble (perfect to him any-

way) turn to imperfect flesh and blood, the completed result of months of hard work obliterated—undone—as if it had never been —and in its place "just a girl," very sweet and lovely and all that—but compared to his statue—oh no!

And that is looking at it from its brightest "angle" (as the motion-picture intellectuals say). As a matter of fact, judging from the agonizing sensation of the human leg (or arm) when rudely awakened from dreamless slumber, the process of transmutation from senseless stone to pulsating flesh must be a very painful one indeed. However pleasing the countenance of the living Galatea might be under normal conditions its expression of mingled bewilderment, rage and physical anguish must have been disconcerting, not to say terrifying, to the sensitive soul of the sculptor, and anything but consoling for the loss of his hard-won and cherished handiwork.

I can picture Pygmalion fleeing madly from his studio, not even waiting for the ele-

vator and vowing by all the gods, then administrating human affairs, never again to make a wish without touching wood or at least crossing his fingers.

THE LOW COST OF CABBING

IN the last ten years or so all the necessaries and most of the luxuries of life have more than doubled in cost—all but one —the Cab—or to be more accurate, the Taxi-cab.

Perhaps it is because a cab is quite as often a necessity as it is a luxury and so falls between two schools, the Stoic and Epicurean, that it is an exception to the rule of rising cost.

Did I say rising cost? If I am not very much mistaken the cost of cabbing, so far from not rising *has actually fallen* in the last ten years, and that brings me to my great invention.

It is a scheme for saving money, a Thrift scheme. It is like this—Every time you take a street-car (what with the dislocated service and the abolition of transfers) you are paying nearly twice what you used to pay, and soon you will be paying even more.

On the other hand, a trip that in a hackney cab, fifteen years ago, cost you a dollar-fifty, today in a taxicab costs you only seventy-five cents.

Now make a swift calculation—

If you take six cars a day you lose thirty cents. A loss of thirty cents a day doesn't seem very much, but in a year, it amounts to a loss of $109.50 which is not to be treated lightly.

Now if you take six Taxis at an average cost of, say two dollars per trip, you are saving (let me see, six times two) twelve dollars a day and twelve dollars a day is four thousand three hundred and eighty dollars a year, which added to the $109.50 you have saved by not riding in street-cars makes a grand total of $4489.50! And this is only

what you save by taking six cabs a day. If you took twice as many cabs *you would save twice that amount,* and if you increased your cabbage to one hundred per diem (a day) your savings for the first year would amount to $448,950.50—nearly half a million dollars!

Go over my figures carefully with your wife when she returns from business this evening—It is a live proposition—Think it over!

THE GREAT MATCH-BOX MYSTERY

PART ONE

I WONDER—has any one ever made a psychoanalytical study of the habits of the Match-box family?

By Match-box family I mean the yellow and black, self-sufficient variety that arrive from the grocer in packages of a dozen and are at once torn apart and distributed (like kittens or missionaires) to every point of the compass.

Each box has its own special territory, and there it should stand, ready to the last match for any sudden emergency, such as

the re-animation of the just-gone-out pipe, or the finding of the eyeglasses in the dark that their owner may be able to read the time on his radium-faced wrist-watch, or a thousand and one things.

There are indeed a thousand and one good and sufficient reasons (apart from its being its plain duty) why a match-box should always be on the job, and like the thousand and one cures for rheumatism not one of them (unless it be a horse-chestnut in the pocket) can be relied upon to work.

I sometimes think "a thousand and one" must be an unlucky number.

The greater the need of its services the less likely is the match-box to be in that particular place where any number of witnesses will testify upon oath they had seen it only a moment before.

What is the strikeology of it? Have match-boxes that perverted sense of humor that finds expression in practical jokes? No, it is nothing like that. Would that it were! It is something less easy to explain.

It is something sinister—something rather frightening.

. . . .

I am a devout reader of detective stories and with much study of their methods have come to regard myself as something of a sleuth, in a purely theoretic way of course; nevertheless I have always hoped some day to put my theories to the test, and here was the chance. *I would find out where the match-boxes go,* I would follow their trail to the bitter end, even if it led to the door of the White House itself!

. . . .

First I made a careful blue-print plan of the flat in which I (and the match-boxes) live, marking plainly in red ink all the doors, windows, fire-escapes (fire-escapes are most important); dumbwaiters, closets, trapdoors (there weren't any but I put them in to make it more professional); then—but why go into all the thousand and—there's that unlucky number again—the thousand and *two* minute and uninteresting details? You

would only skip them and turn to the last paragraph to end the horrible suspense and learn at once what I discovered. * * *

PART TWO

Synopsis of Previous Chapter. Having observed that Match-boxes, placed in every room of the house, invariably disappear in a few hours, the narrator resolves to solve the mystery even though the trail should lead straight to the White House in Washington. Accordingly he makes a plan of all the rooms, closets, etc., and searches every possible hiding-place, but no trace of the Match-boxes is found.

What can have become of them! I have searched every corner of every room in the house—Stay! There is one room I have overlooked—the Haunted Room in the West Corridor, haunted by the ghosts of dead cigarettes, unfinished poems and murdered ideas. It is my study (or studio, as the occasion may be). With trembling hand on the porcelain door-knob, I pause to recall the secret combination.

In vain I rack my brain to remember the

secret combination of my study door. Then suddenly it flashes upon me that long ago I wrote it down in the address book I carried in my pocket.

There are twelve pockets in the suit I am wearing. Fearfully I go through the twelve pockets and many are the lost treasures and forgotten-to-mail letters I find, but no Address Book! Wait! there is still another pocket! One I never use—THE THIRTEENTH POCKET!

With the deliberation of despair I empty the Thirteenth Pocket of its contents—a broken cigarette, two amalgamated postage stamps, a device for cleaning pipe bowls, some box-checks for *The Famous Mrs. Fair,* four rubber bands, a fragment of an Erie time-table and—the Address Book!

On the last page of the Address Book is the Combination, written in a pale Greek cipher, but still legible, grasping the porcelain door-knob firmly between my thumb and four fingers I scan the cipher eagerly. De-coded, it reads as follows—*Twist knob*

to the right as far as possible and push door.

. . . .

With heart beating like a typewriter I obeyed the directions to the letter, and to my intense relief the door yielded and in another moment I was in the room!

And there, scattered over the surface of my desk like surprised conspirators, feigning ignorance of one another's presence, were twelve yellow Match-boxes!

How they mastered the combination of the door and got into the room, I shall not attempt to explain. I am only an amateur Detective.

All I know is that Match-boxes, though they be scattered to the ends of the house (or World), always get together in some one place.

Perhaps it is for safety, they get together.

I have always wondered why they are called Safety Matches.

Perhaps that is the reason!

ARE CATS PEOPLE?

IF a fool be sometimes an angel unawares, may not a foolish query be a momentous question in disguise? For example, the old riddle: "Why is a hen?" which is thought by many people to be the silliest question ever asked, is in reality the most profound. It is the riddle of existence. It has an answer, to be sure, but though all the wisest men and women in the world *and* Mr. H. G. Wells have tried to guess it, the riddle "Why is a hen?" has never been answered and never will be. So, too, the question: "Are Cats People?" seemingly so trivial, may be, under certain conditions, a question of vital importance.

Suppose, now, a rich man dies, leaving all

his money to his eldest son, with the proviso that a certain portion of it shall be spent in the maintenance of his household as it then existed, all its members to remain under his roof, and receive the same comfort, attention, or remuneration they had received in his (the testator's) lifetime. Then suppose the son, on coming into his money, and being a hater of cats, made haste to rid himself of a feline pet that had lived in the family from early kittenhood, and had been an especial favorite of his father's.

Thereupon, the second son, being a lover of cats and no hater of money, sues for possession of the estate on the ground that his brother has failed to carry out the provisions of his father's will, in refusing to maintain the household cat.

The decision of the case depends entirely on the social status of the cat.

Shall the cat be considered as a member of the household? What constitutes a household anyway?

The definition of "Household" in the

Standard Dictionary is as follows: *"A number of persons living under the same roof."*

If cats are people, then the cat in question is a person and a member of the household, and for failing to maintain her and provide her with the comfort and attention to which she has been used, the eldest son loses his inheritance. Having demonstrated that the question "Are Cats People?" is anything but a trivial one, I now propose a court of inquiry, to settle once for all and forever, the social status of *felis domesticus.*

And I propose for the office of judge of that court—myself!

In seconding the proposal and appointing myself judge of the court, I have been careful to follow political precedent by taking no account whatever of any qualifications I may or may not have for the office.

For witnesses, I summon (from wherever they may be) two great shades, to wit: King Solomon, the wisest man of his day, and Noah Webster, the wordiest.

And I say to Mr. Webster, "Mr. Webster, what are the common terms used to designate a domestic feline whose Christian name chances to be unknown to the speaker?" and Mr. Webster answers without a moment's hesitation:

"Cat, puss, pussy and pussy-cat."

"And what is the grammatical definition of the above terms?"

"They are called nouns."

"And what, Mr. Webster, is the accepted definition of a noun?"

"A noun is the name of a person, place or thing."

"Kindly define the word 'place'."

"A particular locality."

"And 'thing'."

"An inaminate object."

"That will do, Mr. Webster."

So, according to Mr. Noah Webster, the entity for which the noun cat stands, must, if not a person, be a locality or an inanimate object!

A cat is surely not a locality, and as for

being an inaminate object, her chance of avoiding such a condition is nine times better even than a king's.

Then a cat *must* be a person.

Suppose we consult King Solomon.

In the Book of Proverbs, Chapter XXX, verse 26, Solomon says: "The coneys are but a feeble folk, yet they make their houses in the rocks."

A coney is a kind of rabbit; folk, according to Mr. Webster, only another word for people.

That settles it! If the rabbits are people, cats are people.

Long lives to the cat!

MLLE. FAUTEUIL

IT is harder for a table or chair to behave naturally on the stage than for a camel to be free and easy in a needle's eye, or for Mr. Rockefeller to get into Heaven (or Hell?) with the money.

What can be more pathetic than the spectacle of a helpless young chair or table or settee starting on a stage career shining with gilt varnish and high ambition to reflect in art's mirror the drawing-room manners of the furniture of real life.

Mlle. Fauteuil (that is her stage name, in private life she is just plain Sofa) is fresh, charming and of the best manufacture. She appears nightly in a Broadway

theater, yet she has attracted no attention. She has received no press notices.

Certainly this is from no lack of charm on her part. Her legs are delightful. In the contemplation of their gilded curves, one scarcely notices that she has no arms or that her back is slightly curved, and her upholstery, a brocade of the season before last.

In a hushed papièr-mâché voice the property man told me the story of Mlle. Fauteuil's persecution—how, at the first rehearsal with scenery, she occupied a perfectly proper position between the center table and the bay window, how the Leading Lady insisted on her being moved as she obstructed that superior person's path when, after writing the letter, she crosses to the window to see if her Husband is in the garden.

Mlle. Fauteuil was then transferred to a station between the table and the fire-place. This was all right, until the scene between the Husband and Wife, when the Husband walks back and forth (quickly up stage and

slowly down stage), *between the table and the fire-place.*

This time it was not a case of politely requesting the intervention of the stage-manager.

. . . .

Poor mangled Fauteuil! When she was picked up from the orchestra pit where he had thrown her it was found that two of her rungs were fractured and her left castor was broken clean off at the ankle.

After half a day in the hospital without either anesthetics, flowers or press notices, she reappeared on the left side of the stage, between the center table and the safe. Here she was conspicuous and happy until it was found that the Erring Son in his voyage from the window to the safe, was compelled to take a difficult step to one side to avoid the fauteuil.

Bandied from right to left, up stage and down stage, at last Mlle. Fauteuil landed in her present obscure position, to the right of the stairway pillar, where, though miserably

obscure, she interferes with nobody's stage business.

In the interior set as now played there is only one chair with a speaking part—this is, the Jacobean chair on which the leading man leans when talking to the ingénue. In the first act, it faces left so that he may show his favorite profile. In the second act, the chair is reversed in order that the audience may enjoy his more popular and extensively photographed left profile.

The moral of this story is that the furniture on the stage must never appear more intelligent than the actors.

MONEY AND FIREFLIES

OH, yes, Money talks. We all know that, and a very noisy talker it is and very harsh and metallic is its accent. But sometimes money talks in a whisper, so low that it can hardly be heard.

Then is the time it should be watched, even if spies and dictaphones must be set upon it. The money whose eloquence, we are told, wished the shackles of Prohibition on this land of the free, talked with such a "still small voice" that everybody (except you and me, dear Reader) mistook it for the voice of conscience.

Speaking of money perhaps you don't know it, but it is nevertheless true, that the

light given off by one of the many species of Firefly is the most efficient light known, being produced at about one four-hundredth part of the cost of the energy which is expended in the candle flame. That is what William J. Hammer says in his book on Radium, giving as his authority Professor S. P. Langley and F. W. Very.

And Sir Oliver Lodge says if the secret of the Firefly were known, a boy turning a crank could furnish sufficient energy to light an entire electric circuit.

But to the Casual Observer there is only one variety of Firefly. . . . Like Wordsworth's primrose:

> The Firefly with fitful glim
> Is just a Lightning Bug to him
> And it is nothing more.

In reality there are almost as many different kinds of Firefly in the United States alone as there are varieties of the great American Pickle.

The late Professor Hagen of Harvard

College, it is said, when enjoying the beauties of Nature one night in the company of the Casual Observer, was aroused from an apparent reverie by the question "Have you noticed the Fireflies, Professor?"

"Yes," replied Professor Hagen, "I have already counted thirteen distinct species."

Another quite different story is told of a well-known English actress—Cecilia Loftus, if you insist on knowing her name. It was her first visit to America and Miss Loftus was sitting with another Casual Observer on the piazza of a country house whose grounds were separated from the road by a belt of trees.

"Do you see the Fireflies?" said the Casual Observer, pointing toward the road.

"Fireflies!" exclaimed Cecilia, "why, I thought they were hansom-cab lights!"

CONCERNING THE TROUSER-CREASE

IT may perchance be questioned how long Britannia shall continue to rule the waves, but that she will ever cease to rule the fashions (the male fashions, I mean) is beyond the dreams of the boldest tailor or the maddest hatter.

Nevertheless, every rule has its exception and the Rule of Fashion is no exception to the rule that rules that every rule has its exception.

Every once in a while, since the invention of trousers, one or another English King has ruled that the human trouser-crease shall crown the Eastern and Western slope in-

stead of the Northern and Southern exposure of the trouser-leg.

The law has never been considered by Parliament, for even the most radical House of Commons would balk at legislation so subversive of individual freedom, but by word of mouth, by courier, by post, by cable, by wireless, by airplane the edict has passed through all the nations and all the tribes to the trousermost ends of the earth.

And with what result?

With no result whatever. As far as it has been possible to push inquiry, it is safe to say that no trouserian biped bearing the mark of a lateral crease has been met with in any quarter of the Globe, or, for that matter, ever will be.

Strange, is it not, that the Tailors (proverbially the most complacent, not to say timid, of men) should, without any plan or program or fuss or demonstration of any sort, unite as one man—or rather one tailor —and refuse to obey the unlimited monarch

of the male fashions of the civilized world. What is the explanation?

There are two explanations. One is Commercialism.

There is no profit to be made out of a change in the geography of a trouser-crease. It is purely a matter of self-determination on the part of the inhabitant of the trousers.

If there were no more financial profit to be gained by the remaking of the creases in the map of Europe than is to be got out of changing the trouser-crease, there would be no call for a League of Nations.

Should some inventive tailor (*inventive tailor!*) devise a crease that could be woven into the very being of the Trouser, then it would be a very different matter. The slightest variation in the location of the crease would cause an upheaval in the (I'm tired of the word Trouser)—in the "Pant" market that would mean millions of dollars to the trade.

As it is there is no money in it.

The other explanation is that the story of

King Edward or King George creasing the Royal Pants in any but the usual place is made out of whole cloth.

But let us suppose for a moment (just for the fun of the thing) that in some possible scheme or caprice of creation there *were* such a thing as an inventive tailor.

And the inventive tailor invented a permanent trouser-crease and planted it on the Eastern and Western frontiers of the trouser-legs.

What would be the probable effect of the innovation on the trouser-bearing species of the human race?

In that process of advancing alternate trouser-legs we call locomotion do we not consciously, or unconsciously, follow in the direction indicated by the point of the crease?

What then would happen if the crease were transferred from the front to the sides?

The Crab alone of all living creatures exhibits in its legs a formation that corresponds to the human trouser-crease.

This ridge-like formation or crease occurs in the *side* of the Crab's legs, not in the front as in the human species!

And the slogan of the Crab (as everyone knows) is, "First make sure you're right *and then go sideways.*"

Shall we too go sideways?

Charlie Chaplin is the only human creature whose feet go East and West as his face travels North and his trouser-creases are so complicated it would be difficult to classify them.

Perhaps they hold the secret of his centrifugal orientation, his inexplicable fascination.

Who knows!

AN OLD-FASHIONED HEAVEN

WE have to thank an Anglican clergyman, the Rev. G. Vale Owen, for the latest description of the Future Life of our species. Impelled by a "gentle, steady but accumulative force" this good man became the unwilling amanuensis of the spirit of his mother and "other friends" and has written a description of the houses, trees, bridges, gardens and people of the other world and their occupations that could scarcely be improved upon by the most imaginative motion-picture photographer, or mechanic or scrub-woman or whoever it may be that writes the scenarios.

We of this world are still, after many

thousand years of waiting, eager for the faintest ray of light that may be thrown on the actual conditions of what we call "the world to come," or as the Spiritists love to say, "behind the veil," but for the tawdry imaginings of the Reverend Mr. Owen the "Veil" serves only as an opaque screen upon whose surface they flicker grotesquely like the disorderly apparitions of a cinema projection.

As a Seer this reverend gentleman, without for a moment questioning his sincerity, is a failure; his narrative, is childish in its crudity and tedious as a dream told at the breakfast table.

One thing, however, is interesting, and that is to trace as we do, through the transcendental claptrap of "rainbow brides" and white-winged angels and the psuedo-scientific jargon of "planes," "vibrations," "spheres," and "fourth dimension," the—shall I say humanizing—influence of the cinema.

For the first time we learn that there are

bath tubs in the Heavenly Mansions—Bathtubs! With hot and cold water, and Dr. Owen does not stop at bathtubs; he assures us there are also—don't faint—*water nymphs!* Can't you see all Israel clamoring for the picture rights!

Imagine the angelic shade of St. Anthony or Mr. Spurgeon coming unexpectedly upon a school of water nymphs!

And how is this for a motion-picture "fade out"?

"As we knelt the whole summit of the hill seemed to become transparent—we saw right through it and a part of the regions below was brought out with distinctness. The scene we saw was a dry and barren plain in semi-darkness and standing, leaning against a rock, was a man of large stature."

I strongly suspect that the Reverend Mr. Vale Owen is, like myself (to my shame confess it), a motion-picture fan!

ANOTHER LOST ART

THESE are mournful days for the Polite Arts. One by one they are passing away—the Art of Conversation, the Art of Paying Calls, the Art of Letter Writing.

The Art of Conversation is no longer even a subject for conversation. No one so much as remembers of what it died. Did it languish and fade away into an Eternal Pause as such a dignified gentleman of the old school as the Art of Conversation would be expected to do—or was it murdered?

The mystery surrounding the death of the Art of Conversation has never been properly cleared up. Some think it died of

heart failure induced by the killing modern pace. Others say it starved to death. Others again, that it was done to death by the chewing-gum trust. For my part, I believe the Art of Conversation talked itself to death. It died of obesity—it grew and grew and grew until, when all the world talked there was nobody left to listen. Then it burst.

No such mystery hangs about the death of the Art of Paying Calls. Here it was a case of plain every-day murder—and what is more, the murderer still lives. Millions of electric volts are pumped into him every day, but he still lives—the more electricity we give him the livelier he grows. He is the Telephone, and the Telephone is the murderer of the Art of Calling.

Poor old Art of Calling! We shake our heads and murmur perfunctory regrets—"good old chap," and all that sort of thing, but really in our heart of hearts, let me whisper it very low—we don't really miss him very much; to tell the truth, we are rather,

that is to say, *quite* glad he is dead. If anyone of us had had the courage of his conviction he would have killed him long ago. To speak plainly, the Art of Calling was a pestiferous tyrant—and he only got what he deserved.

MR. CHESTERTON AND THE SOLILOQUY

I OFTEN talk to myself," says Mr. G. K. Chesterton, speaking in defense of the stage soliloquy. "If a man does not talk to himself it is because he is not worth talking to."

The deduction is obvious, but it is based upon false premises. If Mr. Chesterton is worth talking to, it is certainly not because he talks to himself. It is impossible to imagine a more foolish waste of energy than that expended in talking to one's self. The man who talks to himself is twice damned (as a fool). First, for wasting speech on an auditor who knows in advance every

word he will utter. Second, for listening to a speaker whose every word he can foretell before it is uttered.

Mr. Chesterton's argument, failing as it does to prove that he is worth talking to, is still less happy as a defense of the stage soliloquy.

A character in a play talks to himself not, as Mr. Chesterton would have us believe, because he is worth talking to, but to enlighten the audience on points which the inexpert playwright has otherwise failed to make plain.

The stage soliloquy is only permissible as an indication of the character of one who talks to himself in real life. For instance, if I wished to dramatize G. K. Chesterton, since he often talks to himself, I should have him soliloquize upon the stage. I might make it a double part with two Mr. Chestertons dressed as the two Dromios. As a stage device the soliloquy is only a confession of weakness on the part of the play-

wright, and has been justly sentenced to death.

Its only hope for a reprieve is to retain (at great expense) an ex-president or an eminent K. C. who might argue that since the "fourth wall" of a stage interior is removed in order that the audience may view the actions of the players, it is therefore permissible to remove the "fourth wall" of the players' heads so that the audience may view the action of their brains.

And the ex-president or the eminent K. C. would probably "get away with it."

BUNK

WHEN Alexander the Great cut with his sword the Gordian Knot, which had baffled all his efforts to untie with honest fingers, it goes without saying that his impudent performance received the applause of the onlookers.

As he stood there, his heavy sword still swaying from the impetus of the stroke and exclaimed with a challenging glare at those before him (and belike an apprehensive glance over his shoulder), "Did I or did I not untie that knot?"—whatever might—nay, must have been the unspoken comment that passed from eye to eye, the answer shouted in unison, was without a shadow of

a doubt the Phrygian equivalent of "You sure did!"

For the Great God Bunk (whose worshipers are born at the rate of one a minute) is as old as the world itself; and since we have it on good authority that the world is a stage, even though we do not suspect him of a hand in its making, we know the old rogue assisted at the first dress rehearsal famous for all time for the smallness of the cast and the inexpensiveness of the costuming.

King Gordius, whose genius contrived the unpickable knot, is now comfortably forgotten, while Alexander who destroyed what he could not understand, still enjoys uneasy immortality; for what is immortality at best but the suspended sentence of Oblivion?

And the knot? The hempen hieroglyph that was never solved. When oblivion has overtaken Alexander and even the name of Gordius is forgotten, the world, which is surprisingly young for its age, will still bab-

ble wonderingly of the knot that never was and never will be untied.

Another high priest of the Great God Bunk was Christopher Columbus, and on how frail a foundation rests his immortal fame—nothing more than the fragile, calcareous container, (and fractured at that) of an unborn domestic fowl.

Unquestionably the fame of Columbus rests upon his impudent pretense of balancing an egg by crushing it violently upon the table. To be sure, Columbus also discovered America, but in that he was only one of a multitude. At that moment in the world's history the discovering of America was, like golf, something between a sport and an obsession, everybody was discovering America. So common was it, that only a few of the discoverers are remembered by name, and had it not been for his famous egg-balancing fraud the name of Christopher Columbus would surely be among the forgotten ones.

To balance an egg on its apex—though not impossible, is a tedious and dispiriting

task; and even if Columbus had accomplished it honestly without fracturing the shell, so far from adding to his laurels he might have lost them altogether. Queen Isabella would never have had the patience to sit through so long and boresome a performance, and when the Queen leaves, you know the performance is over.

Indeed, it is quite thinkable that it was the dread of just such an ending to his audience and the resultant stage fright reacting upon an excitable sea-faring nature that caused Columbus to break the egg.

The question now asks itself: Has Christopher Columbus, posing as a clever impostor when in reality only a stage-frightened bungler, obtained his fame under false pretenses? In unmasking his clandestine honesty do we but prove him the greater fraud? Bunk only knows!

Queen Dido of Carthage, on the other hand, came by her dishonesty quite honestly —she inherited it from her royal father's sister Jezebel.

Yes, Jezebel, the patron sinner of half a world of womankind, was Queen Dido's aunt. Good or bad, what was her Aunt Jezebel's was also Dido's by right of inheritance. And none of all the prophets of the Great God Bunk was greater than this prophetess.

Did she not for certain moneys receive the title to so much land as might be compassed by the bigness of a bull's hide.

She did.

Did she not then carve said bull's hide into fine strips and therewith enclose enough real estate for the foundation of the city of Carthage?

She did.

THE COST OF A PYRAMID

IF you were suddenly asked, by way of a mental test, what particular thing or person was most closely associated in your mind with the word *strong,* you would probably say a giant or an ox unless you had been listening to a sermon whose text was the sixteenth chapter of Judges, thirtieth verse, in which case you would be more likely to say Samson, but the typical example of physical strength, would hardly be an Onion.

And yet the Onion, although, like the proverbial Prophet, it may be without honor among its fellow vegetables, is regarded by at least one human outsider as the giant and ox and Samson combined of the vegetable world.

Whatever your gastronomic leanings may be, let you not be tempted to think lightly of the Onion.

Though its name be unhallowed when it appears in vulgar consort with Tripe, and its reek abhorrent in the habitations of the lowly, though it be viewed with contempt as a poor relation by its kinsman the lily, the Onion has a glorious past; it has a record of achievement that is second to none; it was, as I shall presently show, chiefly due to the strength of Onions that at least one of the great Egyptian Pyramids owed its existence. Even Samson might envy the record of the Onion!

. . . .

When I tell you that the Pyramids of Egypt, at any rate one of them, was built by sheer vegetable strength, you may not believe me, but perhaps you may believe the historian Herodotus.

Herodotus found engraved "one one of the Pyramids a complete record of the exact number of onions, radishes and leeks

supplied and consumed by the workmen who piled its monstrous stones one upon the other.*

And how were the Pyramids erected? By some forgotten mechanical farce? No.

According to the late Cope Whitehouse, Engineer and Egyptologist, the Pyramids were built from the apex downward over the conical hills that abound in the locality, the interior of the hill being afterwards dug away to form chambers and galleries. All of which was accomplished by the unaided physical power of human muscles and sinews.

And whence came this power?

It was derived mainly from the vegetable energy of Onions, leeks and radishes transmuted by the chemistry of digestion and assimilation to the muscles and sinews of the slaves employed in building the Pyramid.

Furthermore, Herodotus tells us that with the engraved record of the onions, leeks and radishes consumed by the slaves, was also

* *Herod:* II, 125.

the computation of their cost which amounted to 1,600 talents of silver, this being the total cost of the vegetable fuel for operating the human machinery employed in the construction of the Pyramid.

And now let me ask you—what it is, this thing we call Scent, this mysterious emanation which is the Love Message of the Rose, the Call of the Sea, the Strength of the Onion?

You don't know? Neither do I, no more does anybody.

Of all the five recording faculties which we human creatures share with other animals, the sense of Smell is the most elusive, the most penetrating. It apprises us of impending peril when all our other wires of sensation are "busy" or "out of order" and incapable of giving us warning. It has the mysterious power of reproducing through the "flash back" we call memory the forgotten records of all of the other four sense-films, and yet the scientists who can tell us all about light waves and sound waves,

and even make pictures of them, have very little to say about the movement of the invisible bodies whose impact upon our consciousness produces the sensation of smell.

The terrific scent-energy hurled forth from the seemingly inexhaustible storage battery of an Onion or a Tuberose is more of a mystery to our men of science than is the composition of the crooked light waves from the planet Mars or the height of the flames of the Corona, measured in a solar eclipse.

Even Dr. Einstein, to whom the movements of the heavenly bodies are as simple as is a game of baseball to the average intellect, cannot tell us whether the scent-atoms hurled from the Onion rush forth in an impeccable tangent or are pitched in a hyperbolic curve.

WALTZING MICE AND DANCING MEN

"On some men the Gods bestow Fortitude,
On others a disposition for Dancing."

THUS the poet Hesiod, three thousand years ago, scored with vitriolic antithesis the Dancing man of his day——

And of all the days, for like the poor (and no less deplorable) the Dancing man is always with us.

The gods had much to answer for in the days of Hesiod, and man had much to put up with. Anything, good or evil, that befell him, from the measles to melancholia—from fortitude to dancing—was a gift of the gods, wished on him as a token of their high esteem,

or otherwise. All man had to do was to accept the gift, and, if it chanced to be boils, as in the case of Job, he might be thankful it was nothing worse.

Today we view a gift of the gods with distrust. Before giving thanks we inspect it in the light of Science. We examine it (as a gift horse) in the mouth. If it is a good gift, such as patience, or an aptitude for cooking, we nurture and encourage it; if it is an undesirable gift, like the measles, we eradicate it, or give it to someone else as quickly as possible.

Without knowing it, Hesiod uttered a scientific truth.

That Fortitude and a Disposition to Dance are gifts of the gods is just as true physiologically as it is poetically speaking.

The Dancing man dances, the man of Fortitude faces a cannon—or a musical comedy—because he is built that way. In other words, his behavior is due to certain pathological structural conditions which are inherited.

The behavior of the man of Fortitude is due to the poverty of cerebral tissue in that part of the brain whose function it is to stimulate the activity known as imagination. That is to say, he faces the cannon without the least concern, because he can not imagine what it will be like to have a cannon explode right in his face.

What then are the pathological conditions in the brain of the Dancing man that cause him to dance? Unfortunately for the cause of Science, the brain of the true Dancing man is almost as rare a commodity as Radium. In the United States alone there is scarcely more than a fraction of an ounce of this elusive gray tissue. To procure even the minute quantity necessary for experimental purposes would require the sacrifice of thousands of Dancing men. This in these days of Antivivisection Hysteria, is out of the question.

Luckily for Science, there exists in the animal Kingdom another creature afflicted

with the same peculiar tendency to perpetual rotation as the Dancing man.

It is but one alliterative step from the Dancing man to the Dancing mouse.

The restlessness and almost incessant movement in circles and the peculiar excitability of the Dancing mouse is attributed by Rawitz, the famous physiologist, to the *lack of certain senses which compels the animal to strive through varied movements to use to the greatest advantage those senses which it does possess.*

Comparative physiologists have discovered that the ability of animals to regulate the position of the body with respect to external objects is dependent in a large measure upon the groups of sense organs which collectively are called the ear.

To quote Rawitz again:

The waltzing mouse has only one normal canal and that is the anterior vertical. The horizontal and posterior vertical canals are crippled and frequently they are grown together.

Panse, on the other hand, expresses his belief that there are unusual structural conditions in the brain, perhaps in the cerebellum, to which are due the dance movements.

When the doctors disagree what are we going to do about it?

For my part I am willing to leave it to Cicero—

"Nemo fere saltat sobrius, nisi forte insanit.

THE HOBGOBLIN

THERE is a Hobgoblin that stalks in the path of the athletic young writers of the day and frightens them almost out of their wits.

The Hobgoblin is the third person singular, past tense, of the verb "Say," and his name is SAID.

The Hobgoblin SAID does not stalk alone; with him stalk his sisters and his cousins and his aunts, indeed, all the SAID family except old Gran'ma QUOTH. Old Gran'ma QUOTH, who is much too old to stalk, stays at home and dreams of the good old days when she was a verb of fashion, honored and courted by all the greatest writers of the day.

And when her grandchildren come home in the evening and tell how they frightened the athletic young writers almost out of their wits, she nearly bursts her old-fashioned stays, laughing at the drollery of it. "Egad!" she cries. "An' I were an hundred years younger, I'd like nought better than to take a hand myself, and lay my stick about their backs, the young whippersnappers!"

And I for one, would like to see her do it.

How the SAID family ever became professional Hobgoblins, I can not say. All I know is that, once a hardworking and highly respected family, suddenly they found themselves shunned. There was nothing left for them but to become HOBGOBLINS. Now their only pleasure in life is to see what funny antics they can make the athletic young writers perform in trying to escape from them.

And funny they certainly are.

Here are a few specimens from some of our leading "best sellers":

"To think I have fallen to that!" *grated* Gilstar with clenched teeth.

"I get rather a good price," Gilstar *dared.*

"I'll give you twenty-five dollars," he *offered* wildly.

"What are your terms?" he *clucked.*

But why bother about "best sellers," when you can make almost as funny ones at home? Here is a home-brewed one:

"Where are you going to, my pretty maid?"
"I'm going to the Doctor's, to ask his aid,
I caught a cold when I slept in the loft,"
"Sir," she coughed,
"Sir," she coughed,
"I'm going to the Doctor's sir," she coughed.

"May I go with you, my pretty maid?"
"Oh, yes, indeed, if you're not afraid
Of catching my cold, I shall be pleased,
"Sir," she sneezed,
"Sir," she sneezed,
"Oh, yes, if you please, kind sir," she sneezed.

"Of catching your cold I have no fear,
For I'll take no chances, my pretty dear!"
At this the maiden was sorely ruffled,
"Sir?" she snuffled,
"Sir?" she snuffled,
"What do you mean, kind sir, she snuffled.

"I mean I won't kiss you, my pretty maid!"
"Nobody asked you, my smart young Blade!"
In her pocket-handkerchief, large and new,
"Sir!" she blew,
"Sir!" she blew,
"Nobody asked you, sir!" she blew.

THE VOICE OF THE PUSSY-WILLOW

ON the first of May I took a day off and used the telephone. It is best to take a day off if you want to get a number these times, and the number asked for was Spring one, nine, two, two—yes, Spring, Nineteen Twenty-Two. "There's no such number," said Central; "what you want is Winter 1921." I assured her that was the last number in the world I desired, and after a wait of an hour or so she gave me Blizzard 1888 on a busy wire, comparing notes with Winter 1920, and I began to despair of ever getting my number.

I rang off and waited. I am a patient person, I waited a whole hour to allow the

wire to cool off. Then I called again and this time I was rewarded by hearing at the other end of the wire a faint far-off, fuzzy, mewing sound.

It was the voice of the Pussy-Willow!

It was Lawrence Sterne, wasn't it? who wrote, "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," and it is quite a happy thought that the gentle airs that succeed the blustering winds of March, are a Providential concession to the tender nurslings of the April fields.

But the Pussy-Willow comes in February and early March and it would be asking too much to expect Providence to temper the wholesome and necessary rigors of these months for the sake of the venturesome kittens of the Willow bough.

Who but Providence (or Mr. Hoover) could ever have thought of the happy expedient of providing each and every Pussy-Willow, not only in the United States but also in England, France, Belgium and even Germany, with a warm fur overcoat!

And I verily believe that if the Pussy-Willows were lodged on the cold wet ground instead of perched on the high and dry branches, Providence (or Mr. Hoover) would have seen to it that in addition to fur coats they were provided with galoshes.

PERNICIOUS PEACHES

THE Pernicious Peaches whereof we speak are never out of season. They may be seen almost any month of the year on the covers of magazines, devoted to the moral and social uplift of young girls in general, and the American young girl in particular.

The February magazine peach crop is usually most abundant—All through the merry month of Saint Valentine they hang on the news-stands, singly or in clusters, and Peaches they are to be sure—Peaches in the stupidest, cheapest, slangiest nonsense of the word.

There they hang to quote the redundant

Dr. Roget, F. R. S.—"*simpering, smirking, sniggling, giggling, ogling, tittering, prinking, preening, flaunting, flirting, mincing, coquetting, frivoling, attitudinizing, self-conscious artificial, smug, namby-pamby, sentimental, unnatural, stagy, shallow, weak, wanting, soft, sappy, spoony, fatuous, idiotic, imbecile, driveling, blatant, babbling, vacant, foolish, silly, senseless, addle-pated, giddy, childish, chuckle-headed, puerile,*" and, what is above all else inexcusable in a peach—mushy.

And these (in journals that set the fashions moral, mental, social and sartorial) for our young American sister at the most impressionable age of her life—the age when, whatever may be her dormant possibilities, she is by her nature irresistibly impelled to pattern herself after the favorite girl of her class in school, or the favorite actress on the stage—to copy her coiffure, her dress, her deportment, even the expression of her face.

And how, you ask, can a young girl be

harmed by imitating what, however vacuous or silly, is after all only an expression?

The answer is, that just as a persistent bend of thought modifies and in time fixes the expression of the face, so a habitual expression (or lack of expression) of face influences the bend of thought and, in time, fixes the character.

If you don't believe this, dear girl, stand before your looking-glass and smirk at yourself as hard as you can, until you look (as much as it is possible for a human girl to look) like a magazine-cover Peach. Then try to hold the "Peach" look while you recite:

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

You see it's impossible! You can't do it, any more than you can stroke your head up

and down at the same time as you stroke your chest sideways. Your mouth has come out of curl—the foolish light has gone out of your eyes. Perhaps (if you really feel what you were reciting) you look just the least bit solemn. If so, try to hold the solemn look while you recite the following by a popular song writer:

Call me pet names dearest—
Call me a bird
That flies to my breast
At one cherishing word,
That folds its wild wings there
Ne'er dreaming of flight,
That tenderly sings there in loving delight.
Oh my sad heart keeps pining
For one fond word,
Call me pet names dearest,
Call me a bird!

By the time you have finished, your solemn reflection in the glass will have changed to something almost as idiotic as the "peach" on the magazine cover.

Without question, the vulgar standards of expression these simpering sirens are setting for the impressionable young girl of today will degrade her just as surely as the wholesome, high-bred type of womanhood evolved by Charles Dana Gibson improved and developed all that was best in her sister of twenty years ago.

. . . .

The theory that nature imitates art is much older than Oscar Wilde, who (owing to the carelessness of Mr. Whistler) is supposed to have originated it.

It is so old that Mr. G. K. Chesterton any moment may rise to dispute it, and announce to an astonished London that it is Art that imitates Nature; nevertheless, Nature *does* imitate Art.

Is it possible that there is method in all this magazine madness? Is it possible that these magazines being devoted (among other devotions) to ladies' attire, fear that too great an improvement in the female of

our species would divert her thoughts from the imbecilities of dress to higher—and less profitable—things?

Allah forbid!

SECOND CHILDHOOD'S HAPPY HOUR

I SOMETIMES ask myself (when there is no one else to pester) whether the present tendency toward Primitivism, in Art, Religion, Government, Conduct and Costume (everything in fact) may not be a sign that the world is coming, if not already come, to its second childhood, and I invariably answer myself in the affirmative.

Second Childhood, as of course you know, is the "happy hour" of an old age whose faculties have diminished to the exact degree that marks the undeveloped mental and physical attributes of infancy.

Take any baby—not your own, dear

reader, yours is an exception I know, but any common ordinary baby—and I think when you have examined it you will agree with me that, judged by ultra-modern standards of culture, it is the most decadent being on earth.

To begin with, the baby's sociological viewpoint is a mixture of passionate pessimism and pure unmitigated Anarchism.

Its musical output is a hysterical cachophony with all the exasperating disregard of consonance and key characteristic of the up-to-date composition.

Its Plastic and Graphic Art (achieved through the accident of the inverted Porridge bowl or the overturned inkwell) is the Post-Impressionism of Matisse and Piccasso, whose law is the Law of Moses—"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth."

The Literary Message of the baby is a

combination of the styles of Gertrude Stein, Carl Sandberg and an unassisted Ouija board and is only to be interpreted through the medium of maternal intuition.

And as for the Art Sartorial, are not the fashions feminine venturing each successive season a little nearer to that of the newborn babe?

"Well," says I to myself, "supposing we admit that Modern Culture and Infancy are identical in expression, and that the World is entering upon its second childhood; what does it mean—— Is it the end of all things or only a fresh start?"

There you have me! I reply. There are some questions that even I cannot answer. I give it up.

If, as Dr. Einstein asserts, our planet has been receiving crooked light-rays all this time, it is a very serious matter and there is no knowing *what* may come of it; certainly the Cosmic Light Company ought to be investigated. But don't be down-hearted, dear Reader, some day the Einstein Amend-

ment to the Law of Gravitation may be repealed, and made retroactive into the bargain; it is all a matter of Relativity and it may turn out that the Relativity-shoe is on the other foot and that it is the Earth's orbit that is on the blink and not the light rays at all.

Perhaps Mr. G. B. Shaw will enlighten us —as a projector of crooked light-rays, he ought to know something about it.

PITY THE POOR GUEST OF HONOR

ONCE when marooned on a small island in the midst of a turbulent sea of traffic, latitude Fifth Avenue, longtitude Forty-second Street, I asked the governor of the island, a man of great stature and kingly mien, what he thought was the origin of the institution known as the Complimentary Banquet. Checking with an imperious gesture a monstrous traffic wave that seemed like to engulf us both the next moment, his voice came to me calm and reassuring above the tumult that surged and roared about us. "If it's a wake you do be meaning, sorr, sure it's as old as Ireland itself, it is!"

And the Traffic Cop was right.

Nearly two thousand years ago Strabo, the Greek geographer, describing the natives of Ivernia, wrote: "They are more savage than the English, and enormous eaters, deeming it commendable to devour their deceased relatives."

In this, probably the first reference in literature to the Irish wake, the suggestion that the departed one contributed anything more than the honor of his company must be taken with a grain of salt. Strabo was an awful liar, and whole barrels of salt might be used on his "Geography" without perceptibly affecting its flavor. In all probability the cannibal touch was nothing more than an unseemly concession to the yellow taste of the Attic metropolis.

Nevertheless, though he never appeared on the menu, the "departed relative," the *sine qua non* of all festive gatherings, was (as the social instinct developed among the savage tribes) ever in increasing demand, and it is to be feared that in smart Ivernian

circles it was not unusual to speed the departing relative in promoting the gaiety of an otherwise dull season.

Under such conditions it is hardly to be wondered at that in Ivernia, at that period, personal popularity was the most unpopular thing imaginable, and what more thinkable than that the reluctant candidate for a complimentary dinner should feign for the occasion the grewsome condition necessary for qualification.

With the spread of Christianity, this irksome feat of mimicry on the part of the Guest of Honor, at first a protective subterfuge, grew to be a social convention. And irksome indeed it was.

To feign at a banquet by the exercise of self-control a state of unconsciousness, joyfully achieved by one's fellow guests through more convivial channels, was no task for the amateur. Then it was that, puffed up, comatose, obese, along came the Professional Diner Out. And now, after nearly two thousand years, what have we to show?

Could the savage rite, described by Strabo, depressing as it must have been, by any possibility be as gloomy as the Testimonial Banquet of today? Is the Guest of Honor, sitting at the High Table feigning unconsciousness, the miserable target for asphyxiating bombs of wit, of anecdote, and of reminiscence—is he any less to be pitied than the deceased relative of the Ivernian dinner? Yet we call ourselves civilized; we think it barbaric to hang a fellow being for anything short of murder. Why have we not equal consideration for the innocent Guest of Honor? Why do we not dine him in effigy?

Few of us have forgotten the outrage of 1912 when William Dean Howells was dragged from his comfortable fireside by Col. Harvey, then the editor of Harper's Magazine, who deaf to his cries and entreaties, dined, wined and flashlighted in the presence of a frenzied mob armed to the teeth with knives, and forks and spoons.

How much more humane to have dined

Mr. Howells in effigy! A waxen image simulating as far as possible the kindly features of the Great Novelist, sitting in the place of honor, bowing, even smiling by means of some ingenious mechanism! This, with a phonograph record of the graceful speech of acknowledgment, and the ravening public would have gone home happy and none the wiser. Thus with the dawn of a new era of Humanity, one more chapter of the ponderous book of martyrs would be closed forever.

A NEW MONROE DOCTRINE

WHEN Old Doctor Monroe discovered and patented his famous anti-monarchical specific, warranted to prevent the spread of Effete Despotism, Imperialitis and Throne Trouble, why didn't he invent some equally Reliable Nostrum to check the epidemic of Old World names that was spreading like a blight of infantile paralysis among the thousands of husky young cities then springing up all over the United States? Rome, Syracuse, Troy, Thebes, Memphis, Ithaca, and a host of others, names dark and ill ominous to chubby young cities with no evil traditions to live down to, staining their bright ban-

ners with bloody blots and black bars of sinister tradition where should only be the golden stars and crimson bars of freedom.

Indian names such as Oshkosh and Kankakee were to be had ready-made for the asking; but they were few and for the most part too grotesque and Asiatic sounding for the liking of a serious-minded young republic just starting out in the city-raising business.

But it is no easy task to find new names for cities, above all names that are euphonious, and the last place one would expect to find them is the Medical Dictionary. The names of diseases? And why should that deter us? If a Rose by any other name will smell as sweet, surely a Rose with any other smell will at least look and sound as pretty. Good Doctor Watts (or was it Mr. Wesley?)* when adapting tunes for his new hymn-book answered his critics by exclaiming, "Why should the devil have all the best tunes!"

* It was Martin Luther.

Why, indeed! And by the same token, why should the Diseases have all the prettiest sounding names?

Try one on your city and see if you don't like it.

Has not Dyspepsia, Maine, an austere dignity about it that no old-world city name could possibly confer?

Neurasthenia, Kansas, on the other hand, brings up visions of shady sidewalks, pleasant gardens, and glimpses through slender trees, of a sun-kissed river. If your doctor should prescribe for you mountain air and outdoor exercise would you not instantly buy a ticket to Colic, Vermont? What more catchy name than Measles, Illinois, or Diphtheria, Wisconsin? Stripped of medical association there is scarcely a name in all the *materia medica* that is wholly lacking in euphonistic charm.

Why not bring the matter before a Special Session of Congress? Anything is better than Persepolis and Pekin—even Tonsilitis, Missouri.

DO CATS COME BACK?

CERTAIN it is that Cats are disappearing; that is to say the common friendly Tabbies and Tommies of the town we used to see doing their morning marketing in the ash cans, or with whom we were wont to pass the time of day in the neighboring door-yards.

In the last week I have seen only two street cats and only one to speak to, and that one was a stray orphan kitten who had been adopted by a kind-hearted bookbinder; the other when I would have accosted her gave me one strange look and vanished.

I glanced hurriedly down at my shoes as my hands flew instinctively to my necktie

and hat, but the foot-gear were mates (of long standing) and the hat and tie were each in its proper place; nothing was there about my attire to shock the sensibilities of the most fastidious feline!

What did it mean? No cat had ever treated me with such discourtesy before. Then it was that I bethought me of how few of the feline brotherhood or sisterhood I had seen abroad of late.

Have they been carried off by an epidemic? Do cats catch influenza? or catelepsy? Has the scrap-market been affected by the high cost of living? Has the percentage of nutriment in the garbage can diminished to the vanishing point? Have the mice struck for shorter hours?

As I pondered thus at the corner of a lowly street, there tripped past my line of vision a fur coat whose opulence and sheen made its background of untidy brick and stone seem doubly dull and dingy. The motive power of this unlikely pelt was (as far as could be seen) lisle thread and oxford

ties but I made no further note of the girl; my mind was fixed on the coat—it was the third of its kind I had observed in as many minutes in that mean street.

A shiver ran through me; I had seen a ghost, a procession of ghosts. It was as if a ouija board had suddenly screamed miaou!

And they say cats come back.

THE RUTHLESSNESS OF MR. COBB

ONE by one the idols of tradition go by the board. William Tell's Apple and Paul Revere's Ride were long ago cast into the trash-basket of Fiction; even Joan of Arc has been received into the mythology of Sainthood, and now that hero of our happy childhood, Casabianca, the boy who stood on the burning deck, is about to be snatched from us by that reckless iconoclast, Mr. Irvin Cobb.

Like the ruthless Woodman in the poem, Mr. Cobb has struck his axe into the very roots of this revered tree of our childish belief——

According to Cobb, the Casabianca-tree is only a nut tree and a horsechestnut tree at that. Writing in the *Saturday Evening Post,* he tells us that Casabianca was nothing more than a "feeble-minded leatherhead." If that be so then Barbara Frietchie was a leatherhead, and Edith Cavell, and all the host of those who gave up or were ready to give up their lives for that purely imaginary thing, an ideal, and what *could* the blessed Evangelist have been thinking of when he wrote "*He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.*" John 12:25.

Exactly two thousand years ago when the city of Pompeii was destroyed by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, a Roman sentinel, another idol of tradition just such a leatherhead as Casabianca, refused to desert his post and was burned to death for the very foolish reason that he was "on duty." He is there to this day, standing "at attention," in the shape of a cast made from the matrix of molten lava that enveloped his living

body and you may call him a leather-head if you like, but the memory of his leatherheadedness will endure when sensible people like you, dear reader, and me and Mr. Cobb are forgotten.

. . . . .

Nevertheless there are two sides to every question, and it is quite possible that Casabianca may have been a perfectly sensible lad, whose only thought was to disobey his captain and desert his post, but the tar melting from the heat in the seams of the deck, and adhering to his feet caused him to stick to the ship. Be that as it may, *I* shall stick to Casabianca!

MY LAKE

MR. FINCHSIFTER has compared my Lake to a gleaming sapphire reposing on a corsage of emerald green plush.

I have never seen Mr. Finchsifter's wife—I do not even know that Finchsifter is married, but since the emerald plush bosom of his poetic fancy, stands for miles and miles of heaving Pines and fluttering Laurels and Finchsifter stands barely four feet six in his stockings, by all the laws of natural selection the human embodiment of his Brobdingnagian simile, must be either Mrs. Finchsifter or some not impossible Eve of a Finchsifter dream Paradise. A colossal counter-

part (I picture her), of the waxen Demi-Goddess in the Finchsifter show window displaying with revolving impartiality on a faultless neck and bosom the glittering treasures of India, Africa, Peru, Mexico and Maiden Lane.

To be strictly truthful, I do not know that Mr. Finchsifter's show window can boast such a waxen deity as I have described; indeed for all I know he possesses neither a show window nor the merchandise to advertise in such a window, but I have as the saying is, a "hunch" that Mr. Finchsifter's imagery as applied to my Lake is based on something more than a mere academic interest in the adornment, textile or lapidarious of the human form.

And my Lake—in the first place it is not my Lake (but of that later), neither does it resemble a sapphire any more than the Pines and Laurels on its bank (save that when agitated they heave or flutter) resemble a green plush corsage.

If I were asked for an image, I should

compare my Lake to an India-rubber band rather than to a sapphire. In form an elongated ellipse, it possesses an elasticity of circumference that is little short of miraculous.

The boastful pedestrian, glowing from his early morning trot around its shore will tell you it is a good ten miles.

The persistent swain, scheming to lure his Heart's Desire, high heeled and reluctant, to the amorous shades of "Lover's Landing," tells her, upon his honor, that it is not more than a mile all the way round. To be precise, the distance round my Lake is something between a stroll and a "constitutional"—or to put it relatively about what the circumambulation of an ocean liner's deck would be to an athletic inch worm.

As I said before, my Lake is not my Lake. It is nobody's Lake. Not a human habitation profanes its bosky shores. The only beings that make even a pretense of ownership are five starch-white swans that patrol it from morning till night, turning fitfully

this way and that and probing its depths and shallows with their yellow bills as if seeking for the missing Deed of title. On certain days when the diamond Lake is still, and the Pine and Laurel corsage is untroubled by a tremor, the starch-white company is doubled by five ghostly "understudies" who reflect their whiteness curve for curve and feather for feather with a fidelity of inversion that may find its match only in the art of a Shaw or a Chesterton.

It was on such a day as this that I met Mr. Finchsifter. I had completed the circuit of the Lake and leaving the wooded path that skirts its shore ascended through the woods to the level ground above, where on the further side of a well kept automobile road rises the lofty iron grille that engirdles for miles the country seat of Barabbas Wolfe, the Sausage King, typifying at once, by the safe deposit-like thickness of its bars and the view-inviting openness of its scrollwork, the innate love of show, tem-

pered by newly acquired exclusiveness of a lord not to the manor born.

Gazing, in beady eyed appraisal at the neat but somewhat constricted Italian garden to which the railing at this point invited the eye—stood Finchsifter.

In this crowded jungle of spotless stone Lions, tomblike seats and arches backed by California privet and immature cypresses there was an irreverent suggestion of the Villa D'Este done into American slang.

He turned hearing my step, "Where is it I have seen it—before?"

"In the movies perhaps"—I ventured.

"That's it! Thank you very much!" he exclaimed. "I knew I had seen it somewhere!

After ascertaining my name in reluctant payment for the unsolicited tender of his own he continued, "but the Lions show better in the 'pictures' don't they? Why didn't they get them with moss already.

"With moss?" I queried.

"Sure!" said Finchsifter. "Didn't you

know such a stone Lion comes also with the moss, the same as the genuine old antique furniture comes with the real hand-made worm-holes!"

I remembered guiltily how on the occasion of my last visit to Lake towers when asked by Mrs. Barabbas Wolfe, what I thought of her marble Lions, I had exclaimed with truthful enthusiasm "Wonderful! "But my dear lady *how* do you keep them so clean?"

We walked on together, and though avoiding as we did so the physical proximity of my Lake we could not exclude it wholly from our conversation.

It was a passing glitter of the water caught through the pines below us at a turn in the road that inspired the Diamond-plush simile from which try as I may, I shall never be able to dissociate the image of my Lake.

Greatly to my surprise I found myself becoming interested in Finchsifter, and during the luncheon which followed our return

to my Bungalow and the dinner that evening at his hotel, we laid what promised to be the foundation of a lasting friendship.

To be sure he was a man of many words, but the words of Finchsifter were well trained words, old family servants that knew their places and never presumed, or took liberties with the listener.

If a reply or comment were imperative—an adjective caught at random gave instant clue to what had gone before—even as a single toe joint restores to the naturalist the forgotten form of the Iohippus.

Finchsifter was a mental rest cure, his talk was soothing as a verbal brain massage. I conceived that one might form the Finchsifter habit, in time even become a slave to it as men become slaves to cocaine, Psychoanalysis, or Taxicabs.

But this was not to be.

As a would-be suicide has been turned from his purpose by the chill of the water into which he has plunged—so it was by

Finchsifter himself that I was cured of the Finchsifter habit.

It was on the occasion of our second meeting, appointed at the suggestion of Finchsifter that we take our matutinal walk around the Lake in each others company.

He greeted me with a delighted smile, exclaiming as he took my hand in both of his very new saffron gloves.

"I have a great idea found—!—You are a poet? yes? Then you know all about this Free Verse which I read always about in the magazines? Perhaps you can yourself make it? Yes?" His face fairly shone with the inner flame of his project.

I found myself harkening against my will. What possible interest could Finchsifter have in verse of any kind—let alone free verse. "This will never do," I reflected. "If he compels me to listen—then we shall cease to be friends—I came here to rest. I might as well take the first train back to New York!" Finchsifter was still talking. Eyeing me keenly as if mentally debating

my trustworthiness—he continued: "If it is sure enough Free, then it don't cost nothing."

"What are you talking about?" I said, recalled abruptly from my own thoughts.

"Free verse!" cied Finchsifter. "That's my scheme!—but don't you tell it—It is between only ourselves—fifty-fifty — we split everything—*we* create the demand—we corner the supply, you and me together corner all the free verse in the United States —in this world for that matter and sell it for—" Again he hesitated—"If I might ask it—about what does a Poet get for such a little piece of poetry? The kind that is not free. A piece so long I mean."—He measured a sonnet's width of air between his thumb and fore-finger—"what do you get for that much?" I told him what the magazines pay me."

"What! A dollar a line!" Gott in Himmel! we make a fortune! That's what I tell Rebecca—If we corner all the free verse in the United States and sell it for no more

as five cents a line—we make our fortune! but a dollar a line!—Himmel!"—he fairly danced for ecstasy and then it was I made the discovery, by which I lost if not a Fortune at least a Finchsifter.

I stood still as the tide of words with its flotsam of tossing gestures, continued—I heard nothing. I only waited for Finchsifter to subside.

"Am I right!" He gasped at length with what by every law of supply and demand should have been his latest breath.

"I don't know what you're talking about" —I replied angrily. "All I know is we're walking the wrong way."

"What do you mean the wrong way?" said Finchsifter.

"The wrong way round the Lake that's what I mean!"

. . . .

I don't know how long we stood there arguing the question, I only know that his mind was inaccessible to reason, persuasion —even bribery, for, as a last resort, I offered

to give him a list of all the best free verse writers in America if he would only listen to reason—nothing would move him—Finchsifter had always walked round the lake from right to left and always would—and what I said about his rubbing its precious plush corsage the wrong way of the nap was all rot.

I turned on my heel and left him. Half an hour later when we met at Lover's Landing which is exactly half way round the Lake we passed without speaking.

And now I must wait each day until Finchsifter has taken his walk from right to left round my Lake, taking my walk (from left to right) in the chill of the evening to pacify the tutelary Goddess by smoothing back her green plush corsage, which has been rubbed the wrong way by Finchsifter.

THE HUNDREDTH AMENDMENT

AFTER the passage of the Ninety-eighth Amendment making it a misdemeanor to *"manufacture, sell, own, possess, purchase, nurse, dandle or otherwise caress or display that effigy of the infant form commonly known as a Doll"* . . . the abolition of that feathered symbol of vicarious maternity, the Stork, followed as a matter of course.

The passage of the Anti-Stork Bill or, to be more accurate, the Ninety-ninth Amendment, thanks to the tenacity and tact of President John Quincy Epstein, was the most expeditious piece of legislation put

through by the hundred and fifth Congress.

It must not be forgotten, however, that the introduction of lectures on obstetrics into the curriculum of the kindergartens had done much to educate the child vote and that at the time the fate of the Stork was hanging in the balance, that once esteemed Bird of Prurient Evasion was already becoming unpopular and well on its way to join the Dodo.

And now the department of government devoted to the cause of Infant Uplift, having abolished the Mock-Offspring and settled the fate of the Bird of Nativity, cast about for some new Field of Endeavor.

And what more fitting than that they should light upon that hoary old imposter masquerading under the several aliases Santa Claus, Saint Nicholas, Kris Kringle, and Father Christmas?

At once the Propaganda was started.

Press agents were engaged, lecture tours arranged, magazines subsidized.

No matter what it might cost, this "Vul-

ture gnawing at the Palladium of Infant Emancipation" must be destroyed!!

Santa Claus, once, in the memory of living men and women, adored by children and winked at by their parents, was now branded as an imposter, a mountebank, a public nuisance, and a perverter of infant intelligence.

Santa Claus was an outlaw from the Commonwealth of Reason.

It was "thumbs down" for Santa!

It may be well to explain right here (since none of the events chronicled in this History has yet happened) that the movement for the Emancipation and Self-Determination of Infants, which has now taken such great strides, had its initiation in the presidential term of Miles Standish Sovietski when Congress extended the franchise to every child over five years of age who had made any serious contribution to literature or higher mathematics.

It was in the same year that President Sovietski signed the Sixty-fourth Amend-

ment to the Federal Constitution, prohibiting the publication of fairy tales, and Congress suspended the Limitation-of-Search Act in order that private libraries and nurseries might be raided without warning and all copies of the forbidden works summarily seized and destroyed.

Simultaneously with the federal enactment, the states of Washington, Illinois, Nevada, and Oregon, ever in the advance of any great intellectual movement, passed laws prohibiting *"the personification or representation, public or private, in theatre, music hall, club house, lodge, church fair, schoolhouse, or private residence, of any supernatural, fairy, or otherwise mythical person or persons or fraction thereof."*

The passing of a Constitutional Amendment was now an almost every-day occurrence. Indeed, since the ratification of the Forty-fourth Amendment prohibiting the use of sarsaparilla as a beverage (coffee and tea had been legislated out of existence five years earlier) the enactment of a new

Amendment excited little or no comment. Even the Seventy-ninth Amendment forbidding *"the use of caviar, club sandwiches, and buttonhole bouquets, except for medicinal purposes,"* received only casual notice in the Metropolitan Dailies.

The twentieth century was rapidly nearing its close and the political apathy that for fifty years had been gradually benumbing the Public morale now threatened to paralyze completely what little still remained of courage and initiative.

Even the latest work of Bernard Shaw, "A Bird's-Eye View of the Infinite," published (with a five volume preface) on Mr. Shaw's hundred and fortieth birthday, aroused so little resentment that his projected visit to the United States had to be abandoned, in spite of the fact that "Bean and Soup o'Bean," written only a week earlier, was acknowledged to have contributed largely to the triumph of the Seventy-ninth Amendment, making Vegetarianism compulsory in the United States.

The Hundredth Amendment passed quickly though the earlier stages of routine and perfunctory debate without any appreciable sign of anything approaching popular protest.

Here and there a guarded expression such as "Poor old Santa! I'm sorry he's got to go!" was voiced, in the privacy of a club, by some elderly gentleman. Nothing more.

Somewhere, behind Somebody, was a Power that directed and guided—perhaps threatened. Nobody knew who or what or where it was or in what manner it worked, but work it did and to such purposes that, after a scant week of cut and dried speech-making that deceived no one, the Amendment was submitted unanimously by both houses of Congress and the foregone conclusion of ratification was all that remained to make the abolition of Santa Claus an accomplished fact.

Then, inevitably as fish follows soup, followed the ratification.

The Hundredth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, prohibiting Santa Claus, slipped through the ratification process like an oil prospectus in a mail chute. There was only one hitch, Rhode Island, but since Rhode Island had refused to ratify a single one of the last Seventy-nine Amendments, her action was accepted as part of the program and a proof of unanimity.

So Santa Claus was abolished?

Not so fast please!—Who's writing this History anyway?

. . . .

'Twas the night before Christmas
And in the White House
Not a creature was stirring
Not even a * * * * *

For the benefit of the clever reader who may have guessed the word left out in the last line of the above quatrain, I will explain that the asterisks are used in obedience to a clause of the Ninety-first Amendment prohibiting, both in speech and print, the use

of the word * * * * * which, as the political emblem of the Free People's Party (now happily defunct), came into such contempt that it was made a misdemeanor *"to print, publish, own, sell, purchase, or consult any book, pamphlet, catalogue, circular, or dictionary containing the word* * * * * *"* It has been estimated that over eighty million dollars' worth of Century and Standard dictionaries were destroyed in the first year of this Amendment's operation. The loss in Nursery Rhymes, children's books, and Natural Histories is beyond computation.

But to return to the White House.

President John Quincy Epstein had retired to his study on the second floor shortly before midnight, taking with him the engrossed copy of the Hundredth Amendment which now only required his Spencerian signature to expunge the name of Santa Claus forever from the American speech and language as utterly and irrevocably as the forbidden word. * * * * *

The hours passed in a perfectly orderly

manner, like school children at a fire drill—*one, two, three, four*—without pushing or jostling—*five, six, seven, eight*—(don't you think history is much more interesting in the form of a simple "Outline" like this than spun out in the common manner?)—*nine, ten—!* At eleven o'clock the door of the President's study was burst open by the order of the Vice President, Rebecca Crabtree, now, by a sudden and mysterious stroke of Fate, herself become the President of the United States.

For John Quincy Epstein was dead.

How or just when he died will never be known. Always a cold, forbidding (not to say prohibiting) man, his body when found was still cold—if anything colder; his watch which should have marked the exact moment of his demise, was ticking merrily, so the exact moment will forever remain unrecorded.

But Santa Claus still lives and will live forever!

On the massive gold-inlaid-with-ivory

desk (a Christmas gift from the United Department Stores of America), lay a paper, inscribed, and signed in the President's handwriting, and sealed with his official seal.

It was the presidential veto of the Hundredth Amendment; and by virtue of a clause in Amendment Thirty-three *"no Constitutional Amendment vetoed by the President shall ever be resubmitted to the country nor any fraction thereof—"*

Santa Claus will live forever! Hurray for Santa Claus!

SAY IT WITH ASTERISKS

A VAGUE and terrifying science, astronomy! Only as a subdued though highly decorative lighting effect can I regard the stellar pageant with equanimity.

To be sure I have learned to locate the Dipper and Orion and Cassiopeia's Chair and a few other popular favorites, but this painful knowledge was acquired solely for its conversational value on summer evenings at week-end, house or yachting parties.

Beyond that, all I know about the science of astronomy could be as accurately demonstrated with the perforations of a colander, held up to the light, as on the most perfect star map in the Encyclopedia Britannica.

If the truth must be told, I much prefer Asterisks.

* * * * * *

* * * * *

With a moon and a mariner's compass and a good road map or chart, the traveler by land or sea can get along very well without the stars, but in the trackless mazes of literature and art, how would the wandering Philistine fare without Asterisks? An anthology or guide of any kind without Asterisks would be as unthinkable as a Dalmatian dog without spots or a red-headed boy without freckles.

Imagine yourself in the city of Berlin with a de-stellated Baedeker. You would make Moses-when-the-light-went-out look like a torchlight procession!

Not that I cite Herr Karl Baedeker as the model of stellar perfection. Too many stars may prove as demoralizing as too many cooks. Even that guide, topographer and friend of the tourist is at times bewildering, if not misleading.

On page 133 of Baedeker's Berlin, *"Furniture From the Boudoir of Queen Marie Antoinette"* has two stars, ** while *"Elijah in the Desert,"* on page 108, has, in addition to all his other troubles, to worry along with one star.

And that is not the worst of it.

On page 163, *"a well-preserved Archæopteryx in Solnhofen slate,"* to me by all odds the most interesting object in Berlin, has no star at all! * * *

But no matter how annoying it is, you must never blame the Asterisks. They only did as they were told and stood where Herr Baedeker placed them and, if they did wrong, Herr Baedeker alone was responsible. A good writer—or editor—is good to his Asterisks, and when he puts them in a false position we must make due allowance.

If Asterisks could combine and form a protective union, there might be some hope for them, but a flair for collective bargaining is not in their nature. That being the case, I suggest the establishment of a Fed-

eral Licensing Bureau empowered to investigate the qualifications of would-be employers of Asterisks and issue or withhold licenses accordingly.

And it is high time something were done about it.

Only lately there has been brought to my notice a case of so flagrant a nature that, were there such an institution as a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Asterisks, I should feel it my duty to call their attention to it.

To come down to brass tacks, as the saying is, the flagrant case of cruelty to Asterisks, to which I refer, consists of a fat book, called "The Best Short Stories of 1921." Edited by Edward J. O'Brien—Published by Small Maynard.

Never, I think, were a mob of overworked employees so pitifully huddled together in an ill-ventilated factory as are the Asterisks in this Sweatshop of Twaddle.

The Sweatshop proper—if a Sweatshop may be so qualified—is situated in the rear

of the book, occupying about a fifth of its volume, and consists of:

A Bibliographical Roll of Honor of American Short Stories for 1920 and 1921 in which *"the best stories are indicated by an Asterisk."*

A Roll of Honor of Foreign Short Stories in American Magazines in which *"Stories of special excellence are indicated by an Asterisk."*

Volumes of short stories published in the United States. *"An Asterisk before a title indicates distinction."*

Volumes of short stories published in England and Ireland. *"An Asterisk before a title indicates distinction."*

Volumes of Short Stories published in France. *"An Asterisk before a title, etc."* Follows then a list of articles on the Short Story and last of all An Index of Short Stories in Books, and here the Asterisks are forced to work overtime and Mr. O'Brien's English gets a bit sloppy. He says:

"Three Asterisks prefixed to a title in-

dicate the more or less permanent *literary value of the story.*"

"More or less permanent" reminds me of an advertisement I once saw in a street car: "Face Powder makes your complexion *more irresistible.*" Is it possible that Mr. O'Brien wrote it?

In the division entitled Magazine Averages, Mr. O'Brien comes another cropper with *"Three Asterisk stories are of* somewhat permanent *literary value."* Again, in the introduction, *"Sherwood Anderson has made this year once more the* most permanent *contribution to the American Short Story."*

Mr. O'Brien's invention of varying degrees of permanence is an important contribution to science and entitles him to receive at the very least the Order of the Golden Asterisk of the Second Class with Palms.

* * * * *

Such, in brief, is the Sweatshop in the rear where the toiling Asterisks labor in

weary shifts of one, two and three, pounding out asinine averages and percentages of permanency and near-permanency and plu-permanency with a zeal that would do credit to the framer of a Volstead Act.

Now let us walk round to the front of the Factory, where in his cosy business office which he calls the "Introduction" the Foreman of the works, Mr. Edward J. O'Brien, will tell us in the airy jargon of the shop all about the Fictional Flivvers—in which he is a second-hand dealer—how they are made, what they are worth and, if permanent, just how long their permanence will last.

As Foreman O'Brien warms up to his subject he will describe in vitally pulsating phrases that would drive a movie writer mad with envy, the convulsion of Nature that attended the birth of the American Short Story. *"The ever-widening seething maelstrom of cross currents thrusting into more and more powerful conflict from year to year the contributory elements brought to a new American culture by the dynamic cre-*

ative energies, physical and spiritual, of many races."

All of which speechifying translated into plain talk conveys the astounding information that the hooch of American Fiction is being brewed in the much-advertised Melting Pot! Well, why couldn't he say so and be done with it?

Speaking of the Anglo-Saxon he says: *"The Anglo-Saxon was beginning to absorb large tracts of other racial fields of memory and to share the experience of Scandinavian and Russian and German and Italian and Polish and Irish and African and Asian members of the body politic."* The Melting Pot again! What did I tell you! Continuing, Mr. O'Brien describes the process of fermentation as a new chaos set up by tracts of remembered racial experience interacting upon one another under the tremendous pressure of our nervous, keen and eager civilization. He doesn't explain exactly how a thing so completely lacking in the elements of design as a chaos

should be "set up" to get the best results. All he tells us is that fresh chaos is good material for American literature, and that our Mr. Anderson and others are very busy in a half unconscious way, trying to make "worlds" out of it.

By "worlds" I take it Mr. O'Brien means something vast and vague and *"vitally compelling"* and "organic" that our Mr. Anderson and others will fuse into American Fiction *"in artistic crucibles of their own devising."*

On the whole, things look pretty bright for the American Short Story, what with the "fresh living current which flows through the best American work, and the Psychological and imaginative reality which American writers have conferred upon it," and the "seething maelstrom of cross currents," and the "dynamic creative energies," and above all the *chaos,* the great American Chaos—fresh—unlimited—inexhaustible—ripe for the "artistic crucible," in which it is soon to be fused into a new cosmos of "organic fic-

tion" by the White Headed Boy of the Western World.

*** *** *** ***

On the other hand, how gloomy the outlook pictured by Mr. O'Brien for the Englishman and the Scotchman and the Irishman! "Living at home—writing out of a background of racial memory and established tradition." It fairly gives me the shivers. No wonder their fiction lacks compelling vitality!

But wouldn't you think that with all the Chaos lying round loose in Europe these days, the Scotchman at least would grab enough of it to create a bonnie new world of vitally compelling fiction for himself? That's what I thought, but it seems I thought wrong. The Foreign Chaos differs from the Domestic variety in that it is "an end rather than a beginning, a Chaos in which the Tower of Babel had fallen."

Once more, to translate the O'Brien speechifying into speech—for the benefit of readers who are not movie fans—the Ameri-

can brand of Chaos is fresh and the European Chaos is stale.

The elemental principles underlying all forms of creation are the same, whether you are creating a short story or a buckwheat cake. The same dynamic laws must be obeyed.

You may have the very best possible formula for the creation of a buckwheat cake and the best crucible—I mean the most artistic frying pan that can be bought; but unless the contributory elements of heat, butter and eggs are physically and spiritually beyond reproach, your buckwheat cake will be a failure.

So, too, you may have the most perfect recipe for a short story—from Mr. O'Brien's own book—and you may have the most vitally compelling Psychology—straight from the farm—but if your Chaos be of the European cold-storage brand instead of the "strictly fresh," or, better still, "new-laid" domestic variety, your Short Story will be—like most of those in Mr.

O'Brien's collection—quite unfit for human consumption.

* * * * *

That Mr. O'Brien is a scientist of the first rank has been amply proved by his startling invention of comparative Permanence—see Roll of Honor—but, though it is interesting to know that by the use of Asterisks what was once believed to be the essential characteristic of Permanence can be modified, I doubt if half of one per cent Permanence will ever become popular.

But Mr. O'Brien has made another and more practical contribution to science.

He has computed by means of Asterisks, that thirty-eight short stories by American authors "would not occupy more space than five novels of average length."

What a priceless boon to the budding author about to embark upon his first short story!

All he has to do is to borrow five novels of average length, cut out the pages and divide the total number into seven equal

piles, each one of which will be seven and three-fifths of the total pile.

Six of these piles he may throw away or return to the friends who loaned them—or the Public Library, as the case may be. He must then take the seventh pile and placing the pages end to end on the floor—the roof of the house will do if the floor be too small—and procuring a strip of paper of exactly the same length, begin the Story at one end and continue writing until he reaches the other end.

This will insure the work's being of the right length for an American Short Story, and, if Mr. O'Brien's other two conditions as to "form and substance" are properly fulfilled, the Story will be quite all right and may be published—with three Asterisks—in the Roll of Honor for the following year.

* * * * *

The luncheon hour at the O'Brien Sweat-shop is devoted to an Efficiency Drill of all the Asterisks employed.

The Drill lasts an hour and is designed to

keep the Asterisks in perfect physical condition for their arduous work.

First, there is a grand march of Asterisks in varying formations of ones, twos and threes. This is followed by running matches and exhibitions of high jumping, wrestling and leaping through hoops.

An exciting game of Roll of Honor closes the exercises.

This is the most violent exercise of all and consists of rolling blindfold down an inclined plane and landing in a huge pile of short stories.

The Asterisk that picks up the best Short Story, receives as a reward an honorable mention in the Annual Report.

* * * * *

There have been many unkind things said about the late-lamented year Nineteen Twenty-One, but after inspecting this work of Edward J. O'Brien's I am inclined to think that the title proclaiming it to be a collection of Nineteen Twenty-One's best Short Stories, is the most slanderous state-

ment of them all. It is enough to make even the Statue of Liberty blush!

In no English-speaking country is the Short Story such a recognized feature of everyday social intercourse as it is in America.

It is almost impossible for two Americans to meet anywhere or at any time of the day or night without an exchange of Short Stories. Sometimes the form of the telling is good, sometimes bad. More often it is very bad form indeed, but two things the Story must have—to "get over"—substance and brevity.

The same two things are demanded in the written story. I do not include Form, because Form is essential to Brevity. Artistic Brevity cannot be achieved without Form.

Substance, to paraphrase the Bard, is such stuff as Stories are made on. It must be of good weave, or the story will not hold together.

Some of the Stories in the O'Brien collection are of a rotten fabric, others, while well

woven, have a most disagreeable pattern. Others again are dyed with imported dyes from Kipling, Conrad and Company. At least one of the stories has no fabric at all, but the weaver—like the Weaver in the Fairy Tales—has gone through the motions of weaving so plausibly, not to say impudently, that many, like Mr. O'Brien, are deceived by it.

Mr. O'Brien, defining Substance, tells us that it amounts to nothing unless it be organic substance *"in which the pulse of life is beating."* Thereby he admits that Substance is Stuff, but insists that it must be Live Stuff!

Mr. O'Brien is mistaken; in one of the finest Short Stories ever written the Substance of the Story is a Shadow!

The Story is by "Anderson."

What, *our* Mr. Anderson?

Great Heavens, no! Hans Christian Andersen.

* * * * *

I have not the space to speak in detail of

more than one of the Stories in Mr. O'Brien's collection, nor will it be necessary; one specimen of the deadly *Amonita Bulbosa* in a mess of mushrooms is enough to justify the partaker thereof in damning the whole dish, if he live to express any opinion at all; so, if in a collection that claims to be composed of "Best Short Stories" I find one that is very bad in both Substance and Form, indeed so bad in Substance that it hardly deserves to be called a Story at all, I may surely, with perfect justice, damn the whole book as being false to its title and not what it pretends to be.

But in censuring Mr. Anderson's story "Brothers," I am not so much criticizing the author as admonishing the compiler of "The Best Stories" for the gross misuse of an Asterisk.

One does not have to be an officer of the S. P. C. A. to rebuke a truck driver who is abusing a horse that is hitched to a truckload of junk that is much too heavy for it.

By the same token, I do not pose as a

critic when I take Mr. O'Brien to task for hitching an Asterisk to Sherwood Anderson's story, "Brothers."

I should not have noticed the Anderson load of junk, but for the stupidity of its driver, which annoys me.

It is no way to treat an Asterisk.

* * * * *

The kindest thing that can be said of "Brothers" is that its inclusion in a collection of American Short Stories puts it in a false position. It is unmistakably American—the mark of the "Melting Pot" is all over it—and I suppose it is Short, though it takes a lot of patience to read it, but it is *not* a story in the accepted sense of the word.

It starts nowhere, it does nothing and it gets nowhere, reminding one vaguely of the three Japanese monkeys who see nothing, hear nothing and say nothing.

To apply the O'Brien test, it has no Substance. The weaver went through the motions of weaving, but he wove nothing. There is no "stuff" here.

Neither has it Form. The material—such as it is—is not shaped "into the most beautiful and satisfying form by skillful selection and arrangement." That is to say, it violates Mr. O'Brien's own rule.

If I were asked to give the thing a name, I should say that "Brothers" is a sort of cross between a very dull parody of one of G. S. Street's "Episodes" and a grimy but ambitious newspaper "story" touched up with a dash of that old-fashioned freak of lap-dog literature known as the "Poem in Prose," much petted by Turgenieff in the early eighties, a vehicle—if one may be permitted to change similes in midstream—in which you pay as you enter and as you leave, both.

You pay as you enter with a soddenly self-conscious rhapsody in G minor, and you pay as you leave with a tiresome repetition of the same.

When a Story of the O'Brien school begins like that, you feel sure it is going to lead

to something disgusting and you are seldom disappointed, certainly not in this instance.

It is a sort of elegy on the falling leaves.

Mr. Anderson almost weeps for pity of the falling leaves. Listen to the patter of the Andersonian tears:

"* * * the yellow, red and golden leaves fall straight down heavily. The rain beats them brutally down. They are denied a last golden flash across the sky. In October, leaves should be carried away, out over the plains, in a wind. They should go dancing away."

You have a feeling as you read this, that Mr. A. rather fancies it himself. You can almost hear him say: "I do this fallen-leaf stuff rather well, if you know what I mean!" and since it is the only pretty bit in the Story, you hardly blame him for repeating it at the end.

For my part, I am suspicious; I am not from Missouri, but, nevertheless, I require to be shown.

I ask myself: "Is Mr. Anderson sincere?"

I read further on, and I find that he is not. This is what I read:

"* * * His arms tightened about the body of the little dog so that it screamed with pain. I stepped forward and tore the arms away, and the dog fell to the ground and lay whining. No doubt it had been injured. Perhaps ribs had been crushed. The old man stared at the dog lying at his feet."

Nothing more about the little dog until, a few lines further on, Mr. Anderson shows that the dying agony of a little dog excited only a passing interest in him. "An hour ago the old man of the house in the forest went past my door and the little dog was not with him. It may be that as we talked in the fog he crushed the life out of his companion. It may be that the dog, like the workman's wife and her unborn child, is now dead. The leaves of the trees that line the road before my window are falling like rain—the yellow, red and golden leaves fall straight down heavily * * *," and so on, with a

repetition of the opening rhapsody of grief for the falling leaves.

So, you see, to Sherwood Anderson a falling leaf is a heart-rending sight, but a falling puppy, even though its ribs be crushed and it scream with agony, is quite another thing.

No, Mr. Anderson is not sincere.

And if an artist, though he fairly reek with seething dynamic chaos and vitally compelling psychology, have not sincerity, all the Asterisks in Mr. O'Brien's sweatshop will avail him naught.

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